

PREAMBLE AND RESOLUTIONS

OF

THE LEGISLATURE OF MISSISSIPPI,

IN RELATION TO

The course pursued by the senators and representatives of that State in Congress on the question of the admission of California, and the questions before Congress at its late sessions involved in the slavery controversy.

DECEMBER 17, 1850.

Read, and ordered to be printed.

PREAMBLE AND RESOLUTIONS

Of the legislature of the State of Mississippi, in relation to our senators and representatives in Congress.

Whereas, in a special message of the governor of this State bearing date the 11th of February, 1850, the following communication from the senators and representatives of Mississippi in the Congress of the United States was presented to the legislature then in session, to wit:

“WASHINGTON, January 21, 1850.

“SIR: We, the senators and representatives in Congress from Mississippi, feel it incumbent upon us to advise you, and through you our common constituents, that we have a well-defined opinion that California will be admitted as a State of this Union during the present session of Congress. The President earnestly recommended it, and we cannot be mistaken in supposing that a majority of both houses of Congress will be found to vote for it. Our individual positions have undergone no change. We regard the proposition to admit California as a State, under all the circumstances of her application, as an attempt to adopt the “Wilmot proviso” in another form. But, separated as we are from our constituents, and having no convenient means of consulting them as to their views on the new phase of this perplexing question, we desire, through you, to submit the single fact to the people and the legislature, that California will most likely obtain admission into the Union with her constitutional prohibition of slavery; and we beg leave to add, that we shall be greatly pleased to have such expression of opinion, by the legislature, the governor,

and, if practicable, by the people, as shall clearly indicate the course which Mississippi will deem it her duty to pursue in this new emergency.

"Very respectfully, your obedient servants,

"JEFF. DAVIS,

"H. S. FOOTE,

"J. THOMPSON,

"W. S. FEATHERSTON,

"WM. McWILLIE,

"A. G. BROWN.

"His Excellency JOHN A. QUITMAN,

Governor, &c., &c.

"EXECUTIVE CHAMBER,

Jackson, February 11, 1850.

"I do hereby certify that the within and foregoing letter is a true copy of the original, as filed in this office, the 11th day of February, 1850.

"JAMES McDONALD,

Private Secretary, &c."

And whereas the legislature, after mature consideration of the subject-matter of said communication, adopted, in accordance with the suggestions therein contained, among others, the following resolutions, as instructions to the senators and as expressive of their opinions to the representatives in Congress from this State, to wit:

"*Resolved*, That the policy heretofore pursued by the government of the United States in regard to said territory, (of California,) in refusing to provide territorial government therefor, has been and is eminently calculated to promote, and is about to effect, indirectly, the cherished object of the abolitionists, which cannot be effected by direct legislation without a plain and palpable violation of the constitution of the United States.

"*Resolved*, That the admission of California into the Union as a sovereign State with its present constitution, the result of the aforesaid false and unjust policy on the part of the government of the United States, would be an act of fraud and oppression on the rights of the people of the slaveholding States; and it is the sense of this legislature that our senators and representatives should, to the extent of their ability, resist it by all honorable and constitutional means."

And whereas the Hon. Jefferson Davis, one of the senators, and the Honorables A. G. Brown, Wm. McWillie, W. S. Featherston, and Jacob Thompson, members in Congress from this State, in accordance with said resolutions, and with the interest and will of the people of Mississippi, did, by their action in Congress, resist, by all honorable and constitutional means, the admission of California, with her existing constitution, into the Union as a sovereign State; and whereas the Hon. Henry S. Foote, one of the senators in Congress from this State, in violation of the spirit and intent of said resolutions, and in opposition to the interest and will of the people of Mississippi, did not resist by all honorable and constitutional means the admission of California into the Union as a sovereign State,

with her existing constitution, but, by giving his support to the mis-called compromise reported by the Committee of Thirteen in the United States Senate, violated the instructions of the legislature, as contained in said resolutions, based upon his own request, and disregarded the interest and will of the people of Mississippi: Therefore,

Resolved by the legislature of the State of Mississippi. That the course of the Hon. Jefferson Davis, as senator, the Honorables A. G. Brown, Wm. McWillie, W. S. Featherston and Jacob Thompson, as representatives in Congress from this State, on the question of the admission of California, is approved, as representing the interest and will of the people of Mississippi; that the course of the Hon. Henry S. Foote on this question is not approved, being, in the judgment of the legislature, opposed to the interest and will of the people of Mississippi.

Be it resolved, further, That the course of the Hon. Jefferson Davis, as senator, and Honorables A. G. Brown, Wm. McWillie, W. S. Featherston, and Jacob Thompson, as representatives in Congress from this State, in their firm and consistent support and able advocacy of the rights and honor of Mississippi and the South, in all the questions before Congress at its late sessions involved in the slave controversy, is approved; that the course of the Hon. Henry S. Foote on all these questions is not approved, and this legislature does not consider the interests of the State of Mississippi committed to his charge safe in his keeping.

JOHN J. McRAE,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

JNO. J. GUION,

President of the Senate.

Approved November 30, 1850.

J. A. QUITMAN.

Resolved by the legislature of the State of Mississippi, That his Excellency Governor Quitman be, and is hereby, requested to furnish each of our senators and representatives in the Congress of the United States with a copy of the "preamble and resolutions" passed at this session of the legislature approving the course of the Hon. Jefferson Davis, the Honorables A. G. Brown, Wm. McWillie, W. S. Featherston, and Jacob Thompson, and disapproving the course of the Hon. Henry S. Foote, as senators and representatives in Congress from this State, with a request that said preamble and resolutions be presented to their respective branches of the national legislature.

Passed the Senate November 27, 1850.

J. A. ORR, *Secretary,*

Passed the House of Representatives November 27, 1850.

E. P. RUSSELL, *Clerk.*

THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI—*Office of Secretary of State:*

I, Jo. Bell, Secretary of State of the State of Mississippi aforesaid, certify the foregoing to be true copies of "preamble and resolutions of the State of Mississippi in relation to our senators and representatives in

Congress," and also of a resolution in relation thereto, as the same are of file in my office.

Given under my hand and seal of office, at the city of Jackson, this
[L. s] fourth day of December, in the year of our Lord one thousand
eight hundred and fifty.

JO. BELL,
Secretary of State.